

Chapter 1 : -Catch Those Little Foxes!

Catch a little fox has 8 ratings and 3 reviews. Miriam said: A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,Heigh ho, the dairy-o, a hunting we will go!A h.

October 27, , Alexandra Catch the little foxes! Ryle "Catch the little foxes that ruin the vineyards; for our vines have tender grapes. Look within, each one of you. Examine your own hearts. Do you see there any habit which you know is wrong in the sight of God? If you do, resolve at once to cast it off! Nothing darkens the eyes of the mind so much, and deadens the conscience so surely--as an allowed sin. It may be a little one--but it is not any less dangerous. A small leak will sink a great ship. A small spark will kindle a great fire. In the same way, a little allowed sin will ruin an immortal soul. Take my advice, and never spare a little sin! Israel was commanded to kill every Canaanite, both great and small. Act on the same principle--and show no mercy to little sins. You can be sure that no wicked man ever meant to be so wicked at his first beginnings. But he began with allowing himself some little sins, and that led on to something greater, and that in time produced something greater still, and thus he became the miserable being that he now is. Brethren, resist sin in its beginnings. Some sins may look small and insignificant, but mind what I say--resist them, make no compromise, let no sin lodge quietly and undisturbed in your heart. He began habits of deception and dishonesty in little things--and they grew on him. Step by step, he has gone on from bad to worse--until he has done things that at one time he would have thought impossible. At last he has lost his character, lost his peace, and almost lost his soul. He allowed a gap in the wall of his conscience, because it seemed a little one--and once allowed, that gap grew larger every day, until in time the whole wall came down! Whatever the world may like to think--there are no little sins! All habits are formed by a succession of little acts, and the first little act is of mighty consequence. The ax in the fable, only begged the trees to let him have one little piece of wood to make a handle--and he would never trouble them any more. He got it, and then he soon cut them all down! The devil only wants to get the wedge of a little allowed sin into your heart--and you will soon be all his own. It is a wise saying, "There is nothing small between us and God--for God is an infinite God. One is to jump down--and the other is to come down by the steps. Both will lead you to the bottom. Just so, there are two ways of going to Hell. One is to walk into it with your eyes open--few people do that. The other is to go down by the steps of little sins--and that way is only too common. Put up with a few little sins--and you will soon tolerate a few more. Even a heathen could say, "Who was ever content with only one sin? Jeremy Taylor very clearly described the progress of sin in a man: First sin startles him,.

Chapter 2 : Catch a little fox | GON Forum

*Catch a Little Fox [Fortunata, Brinton Turtle] on www.nxgvision.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. In this traditional folk rhyme the children catch all the animals; however, the illustrator has a surprise for the reader.*

We are most familiar with the red fox. However, there are also black, or silver, as they are called, blue, artic, cross and the gray fox. For centuries, they have been trapped for their beautiful fur. In spite of that, they have survived. The foxes hide by day and hunt by night. My father was a trapper and fur dealer and I was well acquainted with wild animals like the fox. I went with Dad one day to check his fox traps and he had caught one. I discovered at that time, the fox is a persistent and very dangerous animal. There are foxes of a different kind who sneak into churches all over the world. How do we recognize a churchfox? Most look exactly like your average churchgoer. However, there are four things that stand out like antenna: They come from another church or denomination and share how they were treated badly and did not deserve it. They make themselves available to be helpful to others, especially if these other seem to have money. They tell anyone who will listen about all the amazing things they have done in the past and that we should follow their example. If they get a microphone in hand, they try to teach others about the Bible; enough so they appear legitimate and then, sneaky as a fox, they put forth their beliefs. Very craftily they twist the Word of God into what sounds like truth. Generally, these little foxes have sneaked into several churches and wreaked havoc, before they were recognized. The problem being, that once they become trusted by the leadership, they cunningly began take-over tactics. A church fox has the uncanny ability to plant a word here and there that brings questions to the minds of the faithful. This is how the fox tries to appear humble. If given the opportunity, they can undermine strong, solid programs within a church and in some cases, cause a great division in the body of Christ. The gingerbread man was running away and no one could catch him. Then along came the crafty, cunning fox and by appearing to help the gingerbread man, tricked him into a position where the fox gobbled him up. That was the end of the gingerbread man. God has given many gifts to man and one much needed gift is the gift of discernment I Cor. Not everyone has the Gift of Discernment, but it is placed within the body for our protection from the little foxes that spoil the vines. We must not confuse this gift with criticism. Many times, one who has the gift of discernment is told they are being critical, especially when they have discerned there is a fox in the church. What it does mean, is we should be aware there are those who do these things. If we recognize their tactics, we need to catch them by putting a stop to what they are doing before they cause too much damage. First, they should just watch and be silent until they are sure of what they believe. They should pray much about it. Finally, if they are positive a person is causing a serious problem in the church, they need to bring it before the church board. If that would be too uncomfortable, it is proper to write a letter addressed to the board, with their signature. The church board, along with the pastors, is the governing body of the church. Once the problem is brought to their attention, the situation is then in their hands and it is up to them to handle it. You can do nothing more about it, but continue to pray. God knows the situation and sees what is happening. If you have the gift of discernment you also have the responsibility to act when a fox comes into the body of believers. Whatever you do, pray - pray - pray! God will show you what to do.

Chapter 3 : Sowing The Seeds Of Truth: Little Foxes, And How To Catch Them!~The Power Of Little Things

We catch a little fox, and put it in a box, and then we let it go. Grey fox in Fort Bragg, CA. We caught it in a live trap by the chicken coop. We have had our chickens for two years and none have.

They have very keen senses of hearing and smell. They stalk their prey with stealth and patience. They generally eat rodents, insects, worms, fruit, birds, eggs, and other small animals. They are very fast and capture their prey by outrunning them. They use their large, bushy tail for balance when hunting. They are extremely possessive of their food and will not share it with others. In places of vineyards, foxes are common. When the grapes are ripe for harvest, the fox can damage the crop in two ways. One, they nibble on the low hanging grapes and so disturb the cluster and ruin it. Two, they can climb on the trees and vines and so they ruin both the trunks and grapes in this way also. So, there are little foxes that can come in and destroy portions of a vineyard if the owner of the vineyard is unsuspecting and does not have a plan in place to keep them out. Grapevines are listed more than any other plant in the entire Bible. It was essential during Bible times, so it was used as a very common reference often that was to be easily understood. Cultivating and maintaining a vineyard is hard work that takes much effort. Typically grown on a hill, a vineyard needed to be cleared of many stones which are common in Israel. Only then could vines be planted. A wall or hedge built around the vineyard, along with a watch tower, kept thieves at bay, and helped to keep out foxes. The plant required pruning in order to bear fruit. John The grapevine is listed in Deuteronomy 8: It was a land where the grapes grew in large clusters as reported by the expedition of spies sent into Canaan. Num The grape clusters were so large that they carried them on a stick between two men. This gift from God was meant to be enjoyed and men were not to go to war until they had tasted of their own grape harvest according to Deuteronomy Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. The fruit can be either good fruit when we are in a fruitful relationship with Jesus, the vine, in that our motives are His motives and we are seeking to do His will and staying pure. Or, the fruit can be bad when we are not truly connected to the vine and doing our own thing and obeying our own truth. We can also see that little foxes can come in and destroy our fruit, so we need to pay attention to the little foxes who wish to steal our good fruit. These little foxes may be sins that are creeping in that try to draw us off of the vine. The foxes are the evil one who attempts to rip us off from the vine. This is what was sown along the path. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty. Protect us from their destruction and keep us wholly connected to your life giving vine. Thank you for the promise that if we remain in You by seeking you daily that you will also remain in us.

Chapter 4 : Catch the Little Foxes

*Catch a Little Fox [Beatrice Schenk De Regniers] on www.nxgvision.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. A group of children sing a familiar song as they attempt to catch a fox, a frog, a cat, a mouse and even a dragon.*

The cold, bitter winds and bare branches of winter disappear. The warm breezes and colorful blossoms arrive. Budding life and love are everywhere. Hey, wait a minute! What does all this love-in-springtime talk have to do with the Bible? And what about the title of this article? And those who have done so know that Bible scholars and commentators do not agree on exactly how the Song should be interpreted. Solomon observed this beautiful woman while on a trip in the northern territories of his kingdom – maybe to visit certain royal vineyards. Rather than use his powers as king to abduct the maiden for his harem, Solomon decided to disguise himself as a shepherd and win her heart by slowly building a love relationship with her. And his plan worked! Soon Solomon revealed his identity to her and shortly thereafter they were married. King Solomon, of course, spared no expense for the wedding. The marriage procession with all its splendor is described at the end of chapter 3; the wedding takes place in chapter 4; the marriage is consummated at the beginning of chapter 5. In the context of the royal palace and in the public eye, the love relationship between Solomon and his bride continues to deepen and mature throughout the rest of this Old Testament book. No, this is not a fairy tale, but a real life story – even though written as poetry. In chapter 5, for example, there is a little misunderstanding between the lovers. And at the end of chapter 7 and the beginning of chapter 8, the Shulamite woman appears to be a little uptight with all the demands of public life in the royal palace. She would much rather have had Solomon all to herself back in the simple village where she had been raised. Oh, to be free from all the social proprieties and taboos against the public display of affection, and be able to kiss her husband in public 8: But in spite of these ripples and snags, the love between husband and wife continued to grow. Their love triumphed over misunderstandings. They did not let the little frustrations gnaw away at their relationship. If only we worked on our love relationships in the same way – our love for the Lord, our love for that special person God has given us, our love for one another! The Little Foxes This statement about foxes comes near the end of what appears to be a spring walk in the hills with all the beauty of nature bursting out everywhere 2: The lovers resolved to work at their relationship and not let anything come in to spoil its beauty. They likened potential problem areas in their blossoming romance to little foxes. As little foxes can ruin the vineyards by gnawing at the tender shoots of the new vines, so the little problems that inevitably show up in a growing love relationship can also ruin that relationship. These little foxes must be caught and stopped before they do further damage. Take our love relationship with the Lord, for example. Just when everything seems to be going well, the little fox of neglect shows up – neglect of daily communion with the lover of our souls, through Bible reading and prayer. And what about our relationship with that particular person of the opposite sex that the Lord has picked out for us? How often the little foxes of cutting words cause needless breakdowns in relationships that could otherwise be so beautiful. And then there are the little foxes of petty jealousies and misunderstandings that tear down our love for one another. This is because it is a love story. In any love relationship presented in the Bible there are many valuable lessons which are applicable to our own love relationships. Probably the greatest lesson that we can learn from the Song of Solomon is that marital sex is much more than merely a necessary means to propagate the human race. Physical love between husband and wife is a wonderful God-given gift. As long as it is within the bounds that God has set up – and the Bible clearly presents boundary markers – sex is beautiful. Because the Song portrays the deep and wonderful love between a man and a woman, it obviously becomes a beautiful illustration of the love relationship between Christ and His bride, the Church, as seen in Ephesians 5: The problems that come into every growing love relationship are not always easy to deal with, but with diligent effort and divine assistance the task is achievable. Reid With permission to publish by:

Chapter 5 : 9/1/ - Catch the Little Foxes

Catch a Little Fox by Beatrice Schenk De Regniers and a great selection of similar Used, New and Collectible Books available now at www.nxgvision.com

Solomon is very emphatic here. It is "the little foxes" which do the mischief. If the vines are injured, if the beautiful clusters are destroyed, he warns us that it is the little foxes which have crept in and have been the culprits. I want to linger over this thought. I want every reader to lay to heart the importance of little things. Is it not a little one? Yes, it may look like a little one, but for that very reason, be the more on your guard. A tiny hair has in some way found an entrance into the works of a watch. It touches one of the inner wheels, and so again and again the watch stops or goes irregularly. Much valuable time is in consequence lost, and only after its removal, does the watch prove useful to its owner. A spark of fire has fallen upon some inflammable materials. It is but a spark at first, but it soon kindles into a flame. By-and-by through that one spark, a group of valuable warehouses is burned to the ground. A small screw has not been carefully fastened in the boiler of an engine. For a time, no harm comes of it; but after a while, the defect loosens other parts of the machinery. An unlooked for catastrophe shortly afterwards occurs. The boiler explodes and spreads devastation and death far and wide. Many lives are lost and valuable property is destroyed. A mighty ship is about to be launched. It has cost a large sum, and is fitted to cross the ocean and carry precious merchandise. But it will not move. Day after day is spent in vain in trying to get it off the stocks. At length the reason is discovered. A small pebble beneath the keel in a critical position had been the cause of all the trouble. The tiny hair, the spark, the screw, the pebble - have often their counterpart in the Christian life. A harsh word does a world of harm. A neglected duty brings evil to thousands. A little stone in the way - a wrong thought or motive prevents the soul launching forth into the ocean of Divine love. But I would dwell more at length on the illustration which more properly belongs to our subject. Catch the foxes, yes, the little ones - let not one of them escape! If you would be secure, you must be determined to spare none not even the very smallest. Bear in mind "the little foxes" are especially dangerous, because they creep into the vineyard so secretly. They often get in unobserved. Even so, little sins and faults have a peculiar power to beguile the conscience. They often pass unchallenged. They make but little noise or show, and therefore they deceive the heart, and do their deadly work while we are unaware. Bear in mind also, that little foxes will soon grow. Week by week, month by month, very insensibly to yourself - the little one is growing stronger and larger! The one you thought at first a mere plaything because it was so small-becomes an over-bearing tyrant! Is not this true of every sin? It grows by use and habit. Its strength and power is constantly on the increase. If evil is cherished in the deep of the heart, if unholy desires are permitted to remain - soon may follow some terrible breach of the Divine law. Our safety is in watching against the first wrong step. We must not treat the smallest deviation from truth and righteousness lightly. If you once put your foot in the mire of sin, you will sink deeper and deeper! I have heard it put in another way. When first you go out with clean boots you are careful to avoid the mud; but after a while, when they are soiled, you do not so much mind, but go across the mire of the street without heeding it. So when the life is comparatively pure, you shrink from evil; but when the conscience is once defiled by willful sin, you grow careless and indifferent as to what lengths you go in it. Therefore take good heed on this account. Remember, sin grows, and grows fast. Watch against the beginnings of evil. Then there is another peril in little sins. The little foxes are dangerous, because they make a track for others to follow. A little thief may creep in at the window and open the door for those who are lurking near. So a little fox may lead the way for a troop of others to enter the vineyard. The path is easier to find. The hedge will be broken down, or the opening in the wall made larger; so that where at first there came but one, and that one a little one, by-and-by a whole tribe will be found, and the vineyard utterly laid waste. So is it with sins. One makes way for another, and each one that goes before makes it easier for others to follow. There is a companionship in sins as well as in graces. You never find them alone. If you find in the heart the spirit of humility and faith you will find also love, prayer, patience, holiness, dwelling there also. So, too, do sins accompany one another. Very often the evil increases fast. He takes up with bad company, he then becomes loose in his talk, he then finds his way to the drinking

saloon, then, perhaps, he gets into profligate habits, and then acts dishonestly to supply means for his extravagance. In this way very often a young life is blighted and robbed of all its fair prospects, and perhaps the man ends his days in a prison or the poor house. In this and many similar ways, one sin is linked unto another-and wretchedness, shame, and temporal and eternal damnation are their bitter fruit. Look at the first sin that crept into our world. Truly it might seem to some to be a small matter but it was the little fox that destroyed the tender grapes. It begins with a look and a wish. Eve sees the fruit and longs for it. Then she gives ear to the Tempter. She believes his lie, and doubts the truth and the goodness of God. She touches, she takes, she tastes, she persuades her husband to taste likewise. Thus the evil spreads. All the joys of paradise are forfeited. The image of God in the soul is lost. Briers and thorns spring up in the ground. Sins and sorrows without end spring up in the world. One sin, as we might think a little one, has become a giant, and evil of every kind overspreads the face of the earth! The whole world groans beneath the violence, wickedness, and oppression that lie heavy upon it. And to this hour, the outcome of that sin is seen in the ten thousand times ten thousand forms of vice and wickedness which cover the earth, and fill mankind with untold misery and woe! Or take another example. Take an envious, covetous thought. Naboth will not part with his vineyard. So Ahab comes home and yields to a repining, murmuring spirit. He will take no food, and jealousy and discontent fill his mind. Ah, the little fox has crept in! Robbery, false witness, murder, involving a whole city in the guilt of the cruel and wicked deed. And it all arises as the result of a wrong thought cherished in the heart! There is one other point about what we call "little sins" which ought not to be forgotten. The heart-searching Judge of all mankind has a very different standard to ours. We may reckon that a small thing which the Lord may reckon a most aggravated sin. He judges not as man judges. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. Men think that thoughts and motives are but little things. In His sight, thoughts are deeds. He sees in the germ, the full-grown fruit.

Chapter 6 : Catch a little fox: variations on a folk rhyme by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers

"Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that are ruining the vineyards, while our vineyards are in blossom." "Catch us the foxes, Foxes the little ones, Wasting our vineyards, When our vineyards are blossoming." Song of Solomon NASB Spring is the time of year when everything bursts into bloom - including love.

Whether our fox or the jackal Heb. Pulpit Commentary Verse There is some difficulty in deciding to which of the persons this speech is to be attributed. It is most naturally, however, assigned to the bride, and this is the view of the majority of critics. Hence she refers to the vineyards as "our vineyards," which the bridegroom could scarcely say. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that the words are abruptly regarded as a response to the beautiful appeal of the lover. The following are the remarks of Delitzsch on the subject: The vineyards, beautiful with fragrant blossoms, point to her covenant of love, and the foxes, the little foxes, which might destroy those united vineyards, point to all the great and little enemies and adverse circumstances which threaten to gnaw and destroy love in the blossom ere it has reached the ripeness of full enjoyment. But there is an awkwardness in this explanation. The simplest and most straightforward is that which connects the words immediately with the invitation of the lover to come forth into the lovely vineyards. Is it not an allusion to the playful pleasure which the young people would find among the vineyards in chasing the little foxes? The words do seem to be arranged in somewhat of a lyrical form - "Catch us the foxes, Foxes the little ones, Wasting our vineyards, When our vineyards are blossoming. The little jackals were seldom more than fifteen inches high. There would be nothing unsuitable in the address to a maiden to help to catch such small animals. The idea of the song is - Let us all join in taking them. Some think that Shulamith is inviting the king to call his attendants to the work. But when two lovers thus approach one another, it is not likely that others would be thought of. However the words be viewed, the typical meaning can scarcely be missed. The idea of clearing the vineyards of depredators well suits the general import of the poem. Let the blossoming love of the soul be without injury and restraint. Let the rising faith and affection be carefully guarded. Both individuals and communities do well to think of the little foxes that spoil the vines. Matthew Henry Commentary 2: Christ is the Rock, in whom alone she can think herself safe, and find herself easy, as a dove in the hole of a rock, when struck at by the birds of prey. Christ calls her to come boldly to the throne of grace, having a great High Priest there, to tell what her request is. Speak freely, fear not a slight or a repulse. The voice of prayer is sweet and acceptable to God; those who are sanctified have the best comeliness. The first risings of sinful thoughts and desires, the beginnings of trifling pursuits which waste the time, trifling visits, small departures from truth, whatever would admit some conformity to the world; all these, and many more, are little foxes which must be removed. This is a charge to believers to mortify their sinful appetites and passions, which are as little foxes, that destroy their graces and comforts, and crush good beginnings. Whatever we find a hinderance to us in that which is good, we must put away. He is kind to all his people. It becomes them to believe this, when under desertion and absence, and so to ward off temptations. The shadows of the Jewish dispensation were dispelled by the dawning of the gospel day. And a day of comfort will come after a night of desertion. Come over the mountains of Bether, the mountains that divide, looking forward to that day of light and love. Christ will come over every separating mountain to take us home to himself. Song of Solomon 2:

Chapter 7 : Catch the Little Foxes – RLCF

"Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes." (Song of Songs NKJV) What do you know about the fox, a clever, cunning animal, who eats birds and small animals.

Catch the Little Foxes by J. Look within, each one of you. Examine your own hearts. Do you see there any habit which you know is wrong in the sight of God? If you do, resolve at once to cast it off! Nothing darkens the eyes of the mind so much, and deadens the conscience so surely as an allowed sin. It may be a little one but it is not any less dangerous. A small leak will sink a great ship. A small spark will kindle a great fire. In the same way, a little allowed sin will ruin an immortal soul. Take my advice, and never spare a little sin! Israel was commanded to kill every Canaanite, both great and small. Act on the same principle and show no mercy to little sins. You can be sure that no wicked man ever meant to be so wicked at his first beginnings. But he began with allowing himself some little sins, and that led on to something greater, and that in time produced something greater still, and thus he became the miserable being that he now is. Brethren, resist sin in its beginnings. Some sins may look small and insignificant, but mind what I say resist them, make no compromise, let no sin lodge quietly and undisturbed in your heart. He began habits of deception and dishonesty in little things and they grew on him. Step by step, he has gone on from bad to worse until he has done things that at one time he would have thought impossible. At last he has lost his character, lost his peace, and almost lost his soul. He allowed a gap in the wall of his conscience, because it seemed a little one and once allowed, that gap grew larger every day, until in time the whole wall came down! Whatever the world may like to think there are no little sins! All habits are formed by a succession of little acts, and the first little act is of mighty consequence. The ax in the fable, only begged the trees to let him have one little piece of wood to make a handle and he would never trouble them any more. He got it, and then he soon cut them all down! The devil only wants to get the wedge of a little allowed sin into your heart and you will soon be all his own. One is to jump down and the other is to come down by the steps. Both will lead you to the bottom. Just so, there are two ways of going to Hell. One is to walk into it with your eyes open few people do that. The other is to go down by the steps of little sins and that way is only too common. Put up with a few little sins and you will soon tolerate a few more. Jeremy Taylor very clearly described the progress of sin in a man: First sin startles him,.

Chapter 8 : Catch the little Foxes! | Stacy L. Spencer Ministries

In the midst of this romantic work is the caution, "Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom" (Song of Solomon). Foxes love to eat the grapes in a vineyard.

Song of Solomon 2: And this is the tame stuff! There are passages in this book that would have made me blush to read and you stunned to hear, especially when the poet begins describing his beloved part by part and, believe me, he leaves no part of her out. This little book, called The Song of Solomon, is pure, sensuous, youthful, passionate love poetry. If our high school youth ever found out about this stuff they would be reading their Bibles by flashlight under the covers at night! To hear such language come from the Bible is a surprise to most people. After all, religion is supposed to be ascetic, asexual, and void of any passion that smacks of romantic love. Those scholars have obviously never been in love. Anyone who has ever been head over heels in love knows what this poor sap is going through. He sees her everywhere he goes; all he can do is talk about her; he has a spring in his step; and he is spouting love poetry to her with every word he speaks. And she feels the same about him. The love bug has bitten them both! I remember that stage. The entire world seems like eternal spring. I told Jan I would like to take her out to lunch shortly after we first met. She agreed and I met her at her place of employment. But I ate fish that day with a smile on my face and it was as sweet as chocolate candy! Yes, anyone who has ever been in love knows exactly what all this mushy poetry is about. But everyone who has ever remained in a relationship for any length of time also knows that romantic infatuation is fleeting. Poetry gives way to prose. We no longer see the face of the beloved in every rock. That lightheaded, heart-pounding giddiness is replaced with more stable, normal feelings. And none of that is bad. Romantic infatuation must eventually give way to a more mature love. And yet, if love is like a vineyard, as our poet describes it, then there must be the blossoms and fruit of desire and passion and even romance, or else the relationship is nothing more than two people tolerating each other. Verse fifteen of our passage is a funny little verse that, nonetheless, is filled with wisdom that should be heeded by all who are in a loving relationship. She is aware that certain ways of behaving toward each other can creep in and ruin the love between them. So she encourages her beloved to join in catching the foxes now before they forever ruin their love. The little foxes are running wild these days. The percent of wives cheating on husbands is nearly equal to the percent of husbands cheating on wives. Divorce among couples married over thirty years is now so common that it has its own term called Gray Divorce. What are the little foxes that we must catch that, if left to run loose in our vineyards, will destroy the blossoms in our relationships? In this season of weddings, there is one passage of Scripture that is read more than any other. None of the characteristics of love he mentions sound like much on its own, but each one, or its opposite, has the potential to destroy a relationship. One of the little foxes that can ruin a relationship is impatience with the other person. People are in a rush to change each other. Neither takes the time to appreciate the uniqueness of the other. We have this mistaken belief that if love is to work, we have to be completely alike. We have to want the same things, have the same interests, think and act alike. There is a word for thatâ€”boring! No one is exactly the way we want him or her to be. But love is patient and finds a way to bridge the differences. In fact, that is the miracle of marriage. Growth and togetherness and change take time. Catch the little fox of impatience before he knocks off the blossoms in your vineyard. What is it about being married that people think they no longer have to be kind to their spouse? There is a rudeness that sets into marriages that was never there during the dating and engagement periods. Most affairs begin at work because we bring our best selves to work and leave our bad behavior at home. I warn engaged couples to be careful after marriage because there is this tendency to push the automatic pilot button and just take each other for granted. One of the reasons women give for cheating on their husbands is that he stopped showing them affection and gave more of himself to his job than he gave to her. People need constantly to know they are loved and appreciated. Words of endearment are usually one of the first kind things to go in a marriage. We are very good at verbalizing our complaints and criticism of the other. When you love someone, you tell him or her, you show him or her kindness, you treat him or her with respect. Catch the little fox of unkindness and neglect before he ravages the vineyard. But often, a sense of jealousy creeps

into the relationship that prevents them from becoming ONE and they remain two competitive individuals. There may be a desire on the part of one of the partners to prove himself or herself to be smarter, stronger, better, more religious, more powerful than the other. Once you are in competition, then communication gives ways to boasting; dialogue becomes monologue. Catch those little foxes of envy, arrogance, rudeness and jealousy before they plunder the vineyard. Love is willing to compromise, but some people insist that it has to be their way or it is no way. No one else is ever right. No one else has a brain. How can love blossom under such a heavy-handed tactic? He does what he wants to do and so long as she does what he wants to do everything is greatâ€”or so he thinks. Little does he know, until it is too late, that he has smothered the flame. Catch this self-seeking fox that always insists upon its own way before it gobbles up all the fruit of passion and love. When two people live together for very long, they will make mistakes, say the wrong things, hurt the other. And some people never let go. They bring up past hurts and beat the other over the head with them as though they were baseball bats. But love forgives, love is gracious. Love lets go of the past and offers new beginnings. Love seeks to make things right again. There is a beautiful poem in the Song of Solomon in chapter three that goes: I will rise now and go about the city, in the streets and in the squares; I will seek him whom my soul lovesâ€” When I found him whom my soul loves I held him, and would not let him go. There is an ebb and flow to relationships. There come days when the distance between the two increases and maybe even one of the two gets lost or is missing. It is tempting at that point to just give up and call it quits. Love goes after the beloved. Love searches the streets and alleyways and calls out and never ceases until the beloved is found again and held in the arms. Love is so precious, so rare that it should never be easily thrown away or given up on. Catch the skittish little fox that wants to give up too easily and too quickly. There are, of course, many more foxes that can ruin our vineyards of love. What are the ones running wild in yours? Catch the little foxes before they knock off all the blossoms in your relationship and eat up the fruits of passion. And having caught them, who knows, you just may find yourself giddy with young love again, bounding over the hills and spouting mushy poetry to your beloved. We will keep you updated with the most important church information.

Chapter 9 : Catch the little foxes! (J.C. Ryle)

Catch the Little Foxes They made the evening news in Bakersfield. On one of the slopes adjoining the parking lot of a mostly deserted shopping center, someone discovered a den of foxes.

Alarm failing to go off. Getting stuck behind a school bus while running late for an appointment. ATM out of cash. Forgetting to pack a lunch. These are all little things, but like a paper cut, they sting. And when these little things happen one after another, they build up into bigger things. It focuses on the romantic love between a young shepherd and shepherdess in ancient Israel. Foxes love to eat the grapes in a vineyard. Like rabbits that devour your vegetable garden or ants that come after your picnic lunch, foxes are trouble for the vineyard. In this passage, the vineyard represents the relationship between the husband and wife. The foxes are those things that cause damage and spoil the marriage. Just like a little pebble in your shoe can become a great irritation for your foot, small problems in marriage can do great damage over time. Catch the Foxes We all have little foxes in our marriage that threaten to spoil the vineyard. These little things might hurt the marriage outright or might prevent our marriage from flourishing. They could be sins we commit against our spouse or simple failures to nourish and protect our marriage. These foxes could be anything. They could be stinging sarcastic comments thrown at our spouse when we are irritated. They might be failures to be considerate of their needs. They could be complaints made to our friends about our spouse that nurses a growing discontentment. Other foxes might include bitter thoughts, failing to encourage or listen to one another, speaking in a sharp tone of voice, giving them the silent treatment, and putting all our energy into our work or childrearing and having nothing left to give our spouse. The verse says that the foxes have to be caught. Just like any sin in our lives, we have to catch the little foxes one by one. We have to catch those sarcastic comments, that sharp tone of voice, that put-down, that sinful thought. We have to be intentional to love and encourage our spouses. We have to seek ways to grow and nurture our relationship. Just like rooting out any other sin in our lives, it requires work. We have to watch over and tend the vineyard, always being wary and on alert for foxes. When we find them, we have to do whatever is necessary to capture them. Like a gardener who puts up barriers and deterrents to keep pests away, we have to do the same to keep foxes out of our vineyard. Like the rest of the Bible, it ultimately points to Christ. He is the only wise One and is wisdom incarnate. Christ is our Bridegroom, the one who alone loves us perfectly, sacrificially, and completely. Marriage was created to reflect the gospel, to image the relationship between our Bridegroom and the Bride, the church. Therefore, as we read the Song of Solomon, and reflect on passages like that of 2: Apart from him we can do nothing John Therefore, we must turn to Christ and seek him to lead us and guide us in finding and catching the little foxes. We have to repent of our sin and apply the gospel to all the ways we contribute problems to our marriage. As the Song of Solomon reveals in its vivid prose, marriage is a beautiful thing, a gift from our gracious God. May we treasure that gift, watching over our vineyard, protecting and keeping it from all the little foxes that threaten to spoil it. And may we not do so in our own wisdom and strength, but in the strength and wisdom of the Master Gardener, Jesus Christ.